

KEEP STRONG

Vol. 4 No. 2

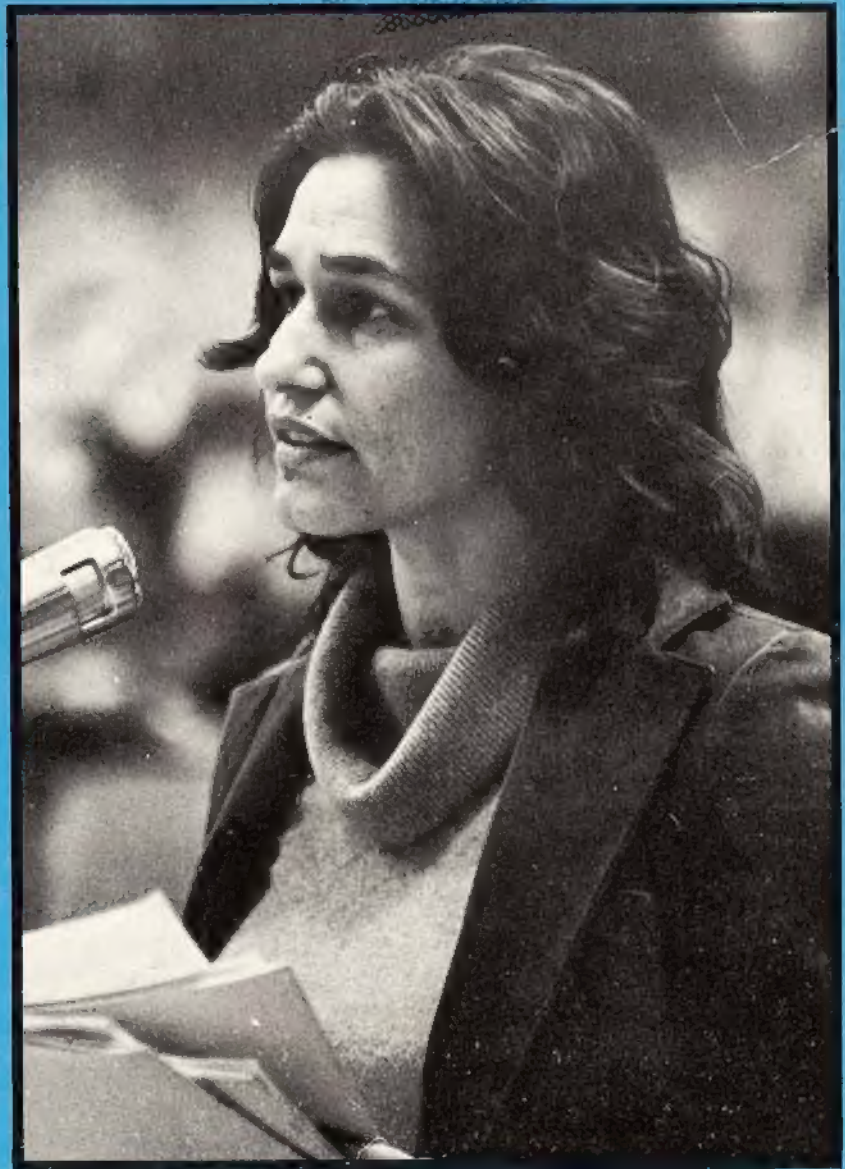
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The Ward Boss's
Organization

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Helen Shiller

*Special
Election Issue!*



These are crucial times. _____
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to be asked and the answers _____
we desperately need _____

Read

KEEP STRONG

- How are local black lung associations across the country uniting and influencing legislation in Washington, D.C.?
- Why has Carter called for the establishment of metropolitan government as a solution to our decaying inner cities?
- Why has the FBI spent millions in tax dollars to gather information on over five million American citizens?
- Who was Steve Biko, and why was it so important to the South African government to silence him?

Veteran Journalist Mike LaVelle says:

“Keep Strong is needed because it deals with the problems of the disenfranchised and abused at the gut level of their desperate lives . . . Three cheers for the Keep Strong staff because it believes in and fights for truck drivers, miners and others who work without benefit of titles, desks or white collars.”

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Special Election Issue

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Acting Editor, Mary Masterson

Winning!

The low level of voter involvement in recent elections is a comment on our collective state of mind in the seventies. Many have grown weary of criticizing those who are not concerned with our criticism, protesting against those who are so seemingly powerful that they do not have to listen; in short, many have become tired of just "fighting the good fight" when the powers that be seem so unaffected.

But what is the difference between just fighting the good fight and winning? The most important thing is that the cause make sense to a majority of the people. Second, there must be a level of organization that allows the majority to become informed on the issues and a structure to mobilize them into action.

It is the conclusion of the editorial staff of this magazine that the Helen Shiller campaign for alderman next February 27 has both of these elements necessary to move forward with a popular victory.

Ms. Shiller, as a candidate, makes sense. She has a strong background in all the areas of aldermanic concern, her dedication as an advocate and organizer of new solutions to difficult urban problems is a matter of record, and her contact and understanding of the many different groupings of people in the 46th ward is unparalleled by any other potential contender in the next election.

We believe, further, that our readers will find in the interview with Ms. Shiller in this special election issue creative, yet extremely practical responses to the questions on voters' minds. What's more, they are not

responses quickly tailored to win the voters' support at election time. Instead, they represent positions that she has held and acted on the basis of for many years.

Finally, we are convinced that Ms. Shiller has developed the necessary organization to effectively inform and mobilize the majority of this ward's voters. Her excellent first-time showing in the hurriedly prepared for special election last May has shown an impressive development already during her petition campaign in November and early December. Activating workers from each of the 53 precincts in the ward, she has collected over 7,000 signatures, with at least 100 supporters signing in each precinct. This is already close to 75% of the total number of voters participating in the last election, and a far greater response than the ward boss was able to muster, although he flexed his patronage muscle strenuously.

In this issue, we describe some of the impressive accomplishments Ms. Shiller has provided leadership for — the model health center, the Community Pride Institutes and a few other examples. These examples represent only the surface of her fine record. A speech by independent leader Bill Singer follows, emphasizing the importance of Helen Shiller's campaign at this period in the city. Then, following an extensive interview with Ms. Shiller herself, there is a lengthy analysis of the machine's organization in the 46th ward. This last article should shock even the oldest and strongest critics of the irresponsible and corrupt clique of politicians that rule our ward, but who will be replaced on February 27 by Helen Shiller, the people's candidate. □

From The Survival Programs...



Helen Shiller has said that "we must create a new responsibility and a new opposition." Attacking some of the most difficult urban problems in some of the most depressed areas of the 46th ward, Ms. Shiller has given an example of "a new responsibility" in the unprecedented citizen participation she has elicited in these areas and of "the new opposition," going past criticism to create new solutions to unsolved problems.

The Uptown People's Health Center

The new Uptown People's Health Center will shortly be

one of the featured health centers in a book commissioned by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare on new accomplishments in community health in the country. It is a model in many ways.

Most significantly, the health center provides the quality of care you could expect from the best of private group practice clinics without the usual high cost in medical bills. Patients at the UPHC have their own doctor, available to them at any time through a 24 hour emergency service, and a wide range of specialists and hospitalization back-ups. At the same time, consistent family health

care is within the economic reach of everyone because of the clinic's sliding scale. In short, the center represents a publicly financed, private health care model, an objective which leaders in the health field and the U.S. Congress have been struggling to achieve for over a decade.

The center is controlled by a community-based Board of Directors and is the focal point of a developing health education and preventive health program already reaching into the neighborhoods and schools. Strong community control and participation is not only important to the quality of the health

... To The New Opposition





The Uptown People's Health Center represents a publicly financed, private health care model, an objective which leaders in the health field the U.S. Congress have been struggling to achieve for over a decade.

center's program, it is responsible for its existence.

The Health Center is now jointly funded by the Health and Hospitals Governing Commission of Cook County, the National Health Service Corps and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare of the federal government. This complex arrangement was established in spite of the opposition of the machine alderman and the city's Board of Health. They opposed the center from the inception because they could not control it, because it did not fit into their scheme of patronage and neighborhood domination.

Helen Shiller led a two year planning effort, including numerous and extensive health surveys, health fairs and countless block to block meetings assessing the actual needs of the community. She also led a two year political fight against an entrenched opposition, un-

tangling complicated political roadblocks, backing down the machine and the Board of Health and winning approval for the program from local, county, regional and federal agencies. Each step of the way involved thousands of people from the affected areas, participating and learning the ins and outs of creating successful solutions to difficult problems for themselves.

The health center is now at the core of a community-based health organization that is beginning to monitor and pressure the "welfare mills" that have for so long been tolerated in our community and to bring additional health resources into the ward.

The Heart of Uptown Block Club Coalition And Community Development Program

The deterioration of housing in the Uptown area can be

traced to two sources: the downtown planners and the unscrupulous, profit hungry slumlords, land speculators and developers. Our current alderman's notorious connection with these slumlords and speculators has greased the way for the virtual rape of this community instead of providing, as he should have, for the protection of its residents.

When urban planning and allocation of public development funds are done by bureaucrats downtown, plans and funds are accessible only to those with big money and political connections. The primary objective of the Heart of Uptown program has been to bring the planning process down to the neighborhood level where residents and small property owners can have a say in it and benefit from it.

Over the last two years Helen Shiller led the organization of block clubs and a

formidable block club coalition in the twelve block area surrounding Truman College. A building by building, lot by lot plan for community development was initiated from each of these blocks. The plan was then consolidated and revised to fit the entire Heart of Uptown area and then taken back to gain the approval of a majority of the residents and building owners on each block.

Through the planning pro-

and provided to the community an understanding of federal guidelines and a roadmap through city bureaucracies.

The area was designated a neighborhood strategy area, which makes possible special provisions for the people who live in the area during the course of community development activities. The housing assistance plan for the area, submitted by the city to the federal government for com-

now exists for a stable Uptown. What stands in the way now is an alderman who will not recognize the will of the majority of the community.

Community Service Center

The Uptown People's Community Service Center is the hub of activity in the Heart of Uptown area. It is where you come if you have problems with the city and city services. It is the center for the Chicago Area Black Lung Association, for many of the neighborhood's food cooperatives and for a series of legal clinics where competent legal advice and access to volunteer lawyers can be found for the most common problems in the area. Naturally, it is also a cultural center for the community and a place where community meetings go on night and day.

The Service Center has also been the staging ground for literally hundreds of fights against arsonists and slum landlords. Through it dozens of tenants unions have been organized, and new approaches to make slumlords responsible and to assist the small, struggling building owners have been developed. Defenses against forced condominium conversion, arson and massive dislocation by outside developers have come from the center's ability to put people with problems together with people with resources, ideas and solutions.

Helen Shiller's role in developing this center, her day to day participation in all aspects of its work, not only won her



Helen Shiller, chairing a recent coalition-sponsored community development hearing: "A model of community participation."

cess, residents and building owners alike came to understand what funding and assistance was available to them. Timetables were established and emergency programs formulated necessary to the survival of the already depleted housing stock in the area. Then began the battle with the city.

Helen Shiller represented the coalition at community development hearings, forced meetings with the commissioner of development and planning

munity development act funds, included 90% of the Heart of Uptown Block Club Coalition plan. But now the battle has reached a roadblock. That roadblock is the present alderman.

The machine alderman opposes assistance to stable family housing while at the same time protecting the most vicious and exploitative slumlords in the area. The federal funds are now available, the community planning and participation

the respect and admiration of her community, but it has given her a first hand understanding, from the bottom up, of the difficult problems the people of this ward face.

The Food Cooperatives

The principle of the Food Cooperatives, as explained by Helen Shiller, is not only to create a service where the middleman is eliminated, and people help themselves to save money, but to create a service that meets the specific needs of the people involved. So the food cooperatives really function as buying clubs. Order forms, with 15 to 20 items selected by the co-op committees in different buildings, are distributed by co-op members to be filled out, and the next day the orders of each building are dropped off by other members. An average family can save several hundred dollars a year, and in senior citizens buildings the co-ops not only save money, they provide a center for important social activity. It is a program, that, with the backing of the city, could expand to include hundreds of thousands of people since it does not depend on any centralized bureaucracy.

The Helen Shiller Community Pride Institutes

The Community Pride Institutes are the kinds of projects that an active and concerned alderman should have been offering for years in this ward. Since the beginning of October, people from many areas in the ward attended training sessions on how to get city

services, on the structure of public health care, on the programs in the public schools and other topics. Information was detailed, information packets were prepared for people to take with them, and outside speakers such as the principal at Stockton School and doctors from the neighborhood health center were brought in as resources.

Besides giving people information as to how to responsibly



The Institutes came out of Community Pride Week — seven days of neighborhood clean-up and an educational campaign against drug abuse.

go about getting changes made and grievances answered, the institutes came up with new ideas such as the block clubs raising money to buy snowblowers to do what the city had not yet been forced to do in our neighborhoods.

The Institutes came out of Helen Shiller's call for Community Pride Week where hundreds of young people and families participated in a week of neighborhood clean-up and

an educational campaign against drug abuse. Organized delegations put the stores that sold toxic glue to children and the medicaid mills that dispense so many prescriptions without adequate medical exams on notice that they were being watched.

The Uptown Community Learning Center And Shimer College

The Uptown Community Learning Center was a spin-off of the Community Service Center, offering reading tutorial programs for children, promoting parent involvement and counseling and instructing area residents in preparation for college programs. With Helen Shiller's leadership, Shimer College was induced to establish a campus in the Uptown area, providing excellent educational opportunities, small classes, individual counseling, job counseling and an introduction to fields such as computer science, graphic arts, community services, electronics and health science. The college and the Learning Center are working closely with Stockton School, and soon with other schools, to utilize the community-based student body as counselors to assist in the northside elementary and middle schools.

As Helen Shiller says, "We refused to let the people of our neighborhoods be written off as uneducable and unemployable. Our success is coming out of the involvement of the community and our commitment to develop real solutions, from struggling day to day with the problems people actually face." □

Bill Singer—On The “New Opposition”

“I came to Helen’s campaign...because I saw in that campaign something very new and very important for Chicago politics.”

What follows here is the text of Bill Singer’s speech at the 3rd Annual Keep Strong Banquet, held last September. The former alderman of the 43rd ward and leader of the independent movement in this city for many years had worked long hours in Helen Shiller’s campaign during the special election last spring, and came to speak at the banquet and urge her to run again. It was indeed at this banquet that Helen Shiller did announce her intention to run on February 27. When Singer refers to “the congressman” he is referring to popular California congressman Ron Dellums who came to speak at the banquet and join in launching Helen Shiller’s campaign.

“I came to Helen’s campaign not only because a friend of mine asked me, but because I saw in that campaign something very new and very important for Chicago politics. And if I can take five or ten minutes of your time, I want to



try and put in perspective what that campaign is to Chicago politics today. In part it talks of failure — not of Helen Shiller, but of independent politics. In part it talks of a degree of fraud, in some ways perpetrated by the independent political movement on the people of the city of Chicago. And

I’m a part of it.

“Before 1968, in Chicago what we had was a lot of democrats. You had regular machine democrats, and you had some other democrats who didn’t want to be associated with that dirty machine, really, but then again, maybe just

enough. After all, there was corruption in Chicago, corruption in politics; what the hell, it got us John Kennedy: steal a few votes, you get a good president. And that was the trade-off.

"A lot of people felt very comfortable with the notion that even though they weren't right in there as part of the machine, even though they were democrats they were Stevenson democrats or Douglas democrats. They weren't machine Chicago democrats, they weren't tainted, they weren't tarnished, they weren't dirty.

"Of course, there were a few republicans. The establishment republicans were with the machine as far as the city of Chicago was concerned. That didn't change, hasn't changed, is still the same and won't change. And at that time, before 1968, at least they thought they could win some things in the county. They tried and sometimes were successful. Today they've even given up on the county, and all they care about is the state. They've made their peace, their deal, and they don't really exist in the city anymore. There wasn't much apart from Hyde Park, which gave us Paul Douglas, and then Bob Merriam and Leon Despres, and isolated, sporadic campaigns — Bill Cousins in '67; Ab Mikva, first in '66, then '68. But all those were spawned out of what had gone on in Hyde Park and taken place for so many years.

"So there was a smattering of independents. But what was



Helen Shiller and Bill Singer.

going on in Chicago at that time? You have the movement out of this city of families; you have the movement out of this city of the economic base for essentially blue collar, working class people, because those jobs were going; you had a segregated city, perpetuated by the political apparatus, for the political apparatus; you had neighborhoods growing older and the money going into downtown Chicago; you had speculators coming in in the guise of urban renewal, which was urban removal, and urban renewal for those who had the money and the political knowledge to get in there at the beginning.

"And there was no independent movement, there was no political apparatus to cry out and say this was wrong. And all of those people who were part in some way, but 'apart,' as they would define it, as Steven-

sonian, or Douglas democrats, watched while all those things happened.

"1968 was a watershed. It

"You were either in or out of the machine in 1968, in 1969, in 1970, in 1971 and 1972. But the war is over in 1972, and so, very sadly, was political action for a lot of people in Chicago who got into it."

was different, something happened. In 1968, in Chicago and in the nation there was a different issue. It was Vietnam. The Douglas democrats, the

Stevensonian democrats, the people who were part but not really part of the machine — it was their issue then, and it was their kids who were beat up in the streets. I don't think anybody in this room, and I see lots of familiar faces, supported that war, certainly not after 1965 or '66. What that issue did, however, for politics in Chicago, was to bring a lot of people into politics, not because they cared any more about the movement of families out of Chicago, not because they

"Chicago is not improving, as I see it. A Chicago Fest does not make a great city... But where are the voices?"

cared about the loss of jobs or urban removal or segregation or a lousy school system, but because their issue was a national issue, a big important issue, and their kids were getting beat up by that political machine, and that political machine was identified with support for the war because it suppressed those who were opposed to the war. And so you had in 1968 a lot of people who said they were fed up with that machine. They didn't want to be identified with it anymore.

"There was no such thing as a Stevensonian or a Douglas democrat. You were either in or out of the machine in 1968, in 1969, in 1970, in 1971 and 1972. But the war was over in 1972, and so, very sadly, was political action for a lot of people in Chicago who got into it.



The speakers' table at the Keep Strong Banquet, September 15, 1978.

"So, very sadly, because unfortunately the public schools were not their issues, they either moved to Evanston or went to private schools with their children. They were professionals, and they worked downtown, and their jobs didn't get moved, and they didn't lose them. And they were owners or renters in high-rise buildings or reasonably good neighborhoods, whose homes didn't get torn down because they had more status or clout or whatever.

"And so what you had, yes, was a lot of people, for some good reasons, who cared about the state of politics in Chicago, who didn't like what happened, who recognized the evils inherent in that political machine, in terms of its suppression of people. But what they really

cared about and what really got them into it was the war. And the issues that persist in Chicago, that were the same in '68 and are the same in '78, only magnified and worse, no longer attract the attention of those people.

"I think there are people in this room who would say that that's a fact of political life all over America. I'm sure the Congressman has heard that elsewhere in the country. That doesn't make it right.

"Chicago is not improving, as I see it. A Chicago Fest does not make a great city. I don't see the movement back, I don't see the jobs coming back, I don't see the public schools doing a better job, and I sure as hell don't see Access to Excellence meaning a damn in terms



Congressman Ron Dellums, Helen Shiller, State Senator Harold Washington.

of integration. But where are the voices? Where is the action? Where is the movement that generates change? Sadly, very sadly, for me, for a lot of other people, those words don't

not only because of that, but because I think that, if we can't do it citywide, if we can't do it in terms of a mass movement (and I think we can't for a while, sadly), the seeds have to

"Helen, and the people who worked in her campaign, demonstrated to me a commitment that...exceeds any one issue...It's a genuine commitment to a community, to build it from the bottom up, to make it a strong community, to serve the needs of the people in that community... I like that. I wish there were more."

generate much enthusiasm any more.

"That's a long way of coming around to why I got in the midst of Helen's campaign. Not only because Jim Chapman, who started for all the right reasons and who stayed for all the right reasons and got involved with Helen and the coalition, with all the things that are going on in Uptown;

stay planted, and the best place is in local communities, where change can happen if you, and a lot of other people, care.

"Helen, and the people who worked in her campaign, demonstrated to me a commitment that exceeded something transitory, like the war issue. But their commitment exceeds any one issue. It exceeds a health clinic, it goes beyond one family

moving in and another family moving out. It's a genuine commitment to a community, to build it from the bottom up, to make it a strong community, to serve the needs of the people in that community, irrespective of who comes and goes. I like that. I wish that there were more.

"I think there's hope in that. I think there's hope because I saw the people in the 46th ward who were not a part of that effort from the inside look at it from the outside and come to respect it.

"We shouldn't kid ourselves. Politics will never involve everybody. Most people won't care, and so in those few instances when you have a chance to persuade that what you're doing is right, we ought to take advantage of it. And in those few instances where you have some people who still care in this city, we all ought to take advantage of it. That's why I wanted to take advantage of it and help. It's going to be a lean period, but we have to keep fighting. We have to keep fighting in the 46th ward next time around when Helen runs again, hopefully. We have to keep fighting in the 48th ward, in the 5th, 49th ward, 43rd and elsewhere, all over in this city.

"And to those of you in this room, who have the same commitment that extends beyond one issue, that talks about justice and decent living and decent schools and decent life for people in Chicago; those of you who keep that faith, I can only say that I want to be identified with you. Thank you very much." □



“I Will Represent the People of the 46th ward”

An Interview With Helen Shiller

KEEP STRONG proudly reprints here the following informative interview with aldermanic candidate Helen Shiller. **KEEP STRONG** reporters have accompanied the popular Ms. Shiller on her incredibly busy schedule of coffees, meetings and door to door canvassing into every precinct of the ward, in preparation for the February 27th election. For this interview, we asked Ms. Shiller to answer the questions which we had heard asked most frequently. We think you will find, as we have, that her answers show a remarkable sharpness in perception, depth of understanding and wide experience.

Ms. Shiller, why are you running for alderman?

My candidacy is a response to those many people who have asked me to run because the solutions to the many problems of the city — which I have been working on along with other people throughout the ward — require that we take our day to day fights into the city council arena. Chicago is a political city. To be effective in developing realistic solutions to neighborhood problems, we must confront the politicians. I am

proud to be the representative of people who want some basic changes made.

In another way, you could say that this campaign is simply an extension of the community work that my convictions have led me into for the last ten years. I know that I cannot have the kind of quality of life which I want to achieve, unless the quality of life improves for the people I live and work with.

Finally, it is what I am seeing behind the faces of the people who live in our ward. All too often, I am seeing fears and frustrations, instead of the pride and sense of fulfillment that every human being should have a right to expect from life.

There is the disabled worker, trying hard to see to the survival of his family, who finds himself forced to move from one slum building to another, his children raised in an atmosphere of drugs, violence and inadequate education that promises only a series of closed doors.

There is the young man who owns a three-flat, who came to the city with his wife and young son to apply for rehab funds, and went away fearful that he would lose all he had because of the regulations guiding the program.

There is a middle-aged woman who works during the week and loves to read and study the events of the world, but the neighborhood library is seldom open during hours that she is not at work, and it is a hardship to go to the library downtown because the transportation there is not easy nor accessible to the western part of the ward where she lives.

There is an elderly woman who lives in one of the high-rises on the east side of the ward. The story of her struggle through ill health, the devotion to her husband who is now deceased, would move anyone's heart. She has kept her pride by struggling to do things with limited assistance from others in spite of her partial paralysis from a stroke.

But she cannot go out and travel on her own to a nearby hospital because the city has not put in sidewalk adjustments at the street corners that would allow a wheelchair to go through smoothly.

There is a young Latina mother who lives in an area that is rapidly changing. While she lives in a six-flat on a CHA section 8 subsidy, the building is substandard, and the owner,



"I am seeing fears and frustrations, instead of the pride and sense of fulfillment that every human being should have a right to expect from life."

who lives in the basement and works for the machine, refuses to fix her apartment. She has holes in the ceiling where the mice come from, and roaches are a common sight. She is studying to be a teacher and is raising three children. She has been trying to move, but has found difficulty finding a place where children are accepted and where she can get a CHA lease approval. She has also found a lot of places where Latinos are not wanted.

The list goes on and on. The fears and frustrations go on and on. There are many of the "larger problems" which confront the city about which I want to talk to you today — protection against big investors and speculators, crime, jobs, education, public transportation, the cost of living — but all of these are really made up of the problems that people

have, the fears and frustrations. I want to work effectively with all of you to change the fear and frustration to a sense of pride and fulfillment. And I want to work to replace the corrupt, opportunist and insensitive clique of politicians who are causing these problems and to change the tacit acceptance of this corruption in government among the people of our ward that makes its continuance possible.



"I want to work to replace the clique of politicians who are causing these problems."

What do you think about the aldermanic raises?

That's an easy question. All of the proposals have been outrageous. In fact, the very idea of a pay raise at this time, when the aldermen are planning to accept a budget that is based on only a 4.5% pay raise for city employees, is the height of arrogance.

Although many of the aldermen claim they have been humbled by the people's response and are reconsidering their original pay raise request, their most recent suggestions are not very impressive.

The most current plan, which will probably be passed by the City Council this

week, gives them a raise of 7% paid retroactive to 1975 when they received their last hefty pay raise. This will bring their 1978 salary up to \$21,500. Starting at this already inflated pay raise (about 30%) they are talking about another 8% increase for 1979 and 7% every year after that, bringing their salary to almost \$28,000 by 1982, which is equal to the 60% increase everyone has been so upset about.

Also, an alderman gets more than just a salary. In addition to a \$200 a month travel allowance, the city budget provides money to cover an aldermanic office in each ward and for two staff for every alderman. Already aldermen receive approximately \$40,000 a year to cover his or her own salary and to run a ward office. With the new proposal for a pay raise this figure will increase to approximately \$50,000 by 1982.

The aldermen are equating their jobs to management positions in big corporations and want the same salaries. That is exactly the point. They are not managers. The city hires various managers. The aldermen are representatives of the people. If they made what the average person in this city makes they might have to ride public transportation, and then they would suddenly become concerned with the issue of transportation.

For the piddling few ordinances that most of them even introduce, they should take a pay cut. And for sitting in the back rooms, wheeling and dealing to increase their political fortunes, they should be fined.

What about public transportation?

Although our ward has a large number of bus and elevated routes through it, thousand of ward residents have complaints about inconvenience caused by poor planning in the system. These are just a few of the complaints I have heard: "I live in a seniors' building, but have to walk several blocks to a bus stop"; "Many times I have had to wait 30 minutes for a bus. There's no bus shelter and no bench. Then three of them come along at



"The key is to develop our own plan, in this case a transportation plan for the whole ward. With the citizens' plan in hand, a fighting alderman could negotiate significant improvements quickly."

once." "I want a bus shelter at our bus stop on the lakefront." "If I had public transportation to get to my job in the suburbs, I could get out of this day labor rip-off."

As a full time alderman, I am more than willing and will certainly attempt to make sure that each citizen gets a fair hearing. And I will help to mobilize pressure behind citizen demands. But I believe that even more should be done.

The old days of ward boss politics — the days my opponent still lives in — have changed. True, there are still ward bosses, like my opponent, with varying degrees of power, but in many areas of city service they are ineffective. This is because these services, including public transportation, are determined by comprehensive planning done in bureaucratic offices for the whole city or even the broader metropolitan area.

Several years ago, the RTA (Regional Transportation Authority) was created, and the CTA was made part of it. At the head of the RTA, determining transportation needs and changes for a six county area, is now Lewis Hill. Hill was the former commissioner of Development and Planning for many years, and he showed consistently his lack of

concern for the neighborhoods. In making changes and improvements in the public transportation, we are up against an enormous bureaucracy following comprehensive plans that were not made with citizen participation at the ward level.

I believe there is a way that we in our ward can combat the downtown and even regional bureaucratic planning process. We proved it possible when we backed down the Board of Health and the city's health planning bureau to get our new comprehensive health center in Uptown.

The key is to develop our own plan, in this case a transportation plan, for the whole ward. This should be done by carrying out block by block surveys and questionnaires, developing the plan on the basis of what people actually say they need, and then taking the completed plan back to the people on a block by block basis for criticism or approval. We might even have to launch a ward-wide campaign to show that there is broad support for the plan.

With the citizen's plan in hand and the support of the citizens documented, a fighting alderman could back down the city and regional planners and negotiate signifi-

cant improvements quickly. Public pressure, combined with legal leverage in forcing the city to follow federal guidelines for the federal monies it uses for transportation, can be successful.

I have had successful experience with developing these kind of citizen involvement plans in housing and health care and in using them to get necessary changes made. Recently I have talked with several experts in the field of public transportation and am convinced that such a ward-wide citizen's transportation plan is feasible. It is a new kind of tactic to meet a new kind of situation. It is, of course, one that my opponent, who would not dare buck the party bosses and the likes of Lewis Hill, would not even try, even if he had the energy and expertise to attempt it.

One further point on public transportation which I would like to make concerns the special services we were promised when the RTA proposal was first presented on the ballot. At that time, I opposed the RTA referendum because the promises that were being made in public were not spelled out in writing. The RTA backers, including my opponent and the Chicago machine, promised that the RTA would provide mini-bus service for senior citizens and transportation for inner city residents to industrial jobs in the suburbs.

As many of us had predicted, the RTA actually resulted in a cut in public transportation to Chicago's neighborhoods, and what few special services were developed operated only in the suburban area or in downtown Chicago, such as the fashionable culture bus. But the Chicago City Council never said a word. I believe that a fight has to be waged by citizens of this city and their political representatives to get our fair share of RTA services.

In our ward particularly, there should be mini-bus service for our many senior citizens. Realistic transportation to jobs in the suburbs would ease high unemployment as well as weaken the hold of treacherous

and exploitative day labor agencies on many of our men and women. These would be among the many improvements that would go into our ward transportation plan which we could then use as a basis for negotiation with the RTA.

Please explain your position on the housing problem in the Uptown area.

The housing problems of Uptown represent one of the most significant challenges to our ward, indeed our city, on many fronts. First let me try to describe the problems, and then let me say what I think can be done.

The buildings in Uptown are actually some of the best structures in the city. Structurally, they are far superior to most of the construction that is going on today. At the same time, most of the buildings in the neighborhood are badly run down.

While the population of Uptown has decreased somewhat over the last five years with the destruction of many buildings, the buildings that remain are badly overcrowded. As the vacancy rate has slipped to nothing, large families have been crowded into smaller apartments for which, generally, higher and higher rents are extracted.

In fact, Uptown, the people of Uptown, comprising a nationally unique economically, racially and ethnically mixed community, are people who have been the victims of urban renewal: urban removal. They have been driven from one place to another by the city, by arson, by slumlords within the community, and many by the same conditions in other communities that forced them to come to Uptown in the first place. It is as great an injustice as you will find anywhere.

The city has done nothing to preserve low and moderate-income large family housing and much to promote its destruction. While many roadblocks stand in the way of the smaller three or six-flat owner or

home owner, on the other hand, the substandard, truly exploitative residential hotels are given political protection.

For the city planners, the ward politicians and the real estate speculators, Uptown is not a place where people live and have a community, it is simply a marketplace, a collection of lots and buildings to be bought, milked, traded and sold. The activities of slumlords, residential hotel owners, fly-by-night real estate speculators could not be successful if their maneuvers were not greased by the ward politics of my opponent through the laws and agencies of the city that should prohibit such activity.

On the other hand, the honest building owners in Uptown — and there are many — come up against constant harassment from the city and a brick wall when they come to the city for assistance.

The housing problem in Uptown has this at the core: the ward political bosses are cooperating with the real estate speculators and slumlords to create an unstable community where fast money can be made. The resultant frustration and suffering for the people who live in Uptown should be humiliating to every citizen of this city who has a conscience.

What can be done? First of all, the law must be applied fairly and must be turned against those who flagrantly violate it. As alderman, I will be in a unique position to bring daily attention on the slumlords and political connections that have kept them safe.

Secondly, a plan for developing a stable community for the people who live in Uptown now must be developed. We have already made significant strides. In the 12 block "Heart of Uptown" area, a housing assistance plan for the designation of the use of federal housing assistance monies has been developed, on a block by block basis, with the participation and support of the majority of the residents and owners. The city actually used this housing assistance

plan in their application for federal community development act funds this last year. In addition, through the efforts of the block club coalition which organized the planning process, the area has been declared a neighborhood strategy area, entitling the current residents to special considerations in rehab and new construction projects funded by the federal government.

What stands in the way of a just and stable Uptown? The present alderman and a maze of bureaucrats downtown. The present alderman publicly opposes federal subsidies and the construction of scattered site housing, while turning his back when his precinct captains and political friends get public subsidies for grossly substandard buildings they own. And there is no advocate for the small building owner to help him fight the bureaucratic wasteland in the department of development and planning.

The residents and owners of Uptown are organized. The public funding is available. Uptown could be a beautiful and unique community and an example of justice at the end of an urban renewal trail of tears. But not if my opponent is re-elected on February 27th.

Could you speak for a minute about housing problems in other parts of the ward?

While it might seem on the face of it that the problems in our economically diverse ward are very different, they share a common theme. Let me begin on the east side of the ward and work west.

On the very eastern edge of the ward, along Lake Shore Drive and Marine Drive, a majority of the high-rise buildings have gone condominium. With a few exceptions, like 3750 Lake Shore Drive, which is cooperatively owned by the tenants, the rest of the buildings are headed in this direction. This, of course, has and will continue to cause great problems for the many renters who are on fixed incomes and cannot afford to be



700-708 W. Bittersweet: under the gun of threatened condo conversion.



"Uptown could be a beautiful and unique community at the end of an urban renewal trail of tears."

forced into a hasty investment when it is announced that the building is going condo. It also causes problems for those who can afford it and even want to invest in a condominium for themselves.

Following the city-wide average, as many

as 40% of the condo apartments are bought by outside investors who do not intend to live in the apartments themselves. This means that the buildings become unstable, with many turnovers. The residents often no longer know each other and the "building community" that once existed deteriorates. Fear and insecurity follow the beginning of incidences of burglaries. And then of course, unscrupulous condominium developers and investors often cause residents to be forced into financially unadvantageous arrangements.

Besides closely watching these condominium conversions, there are a series of legislative remedies that are required both for the condo buyer as well as the renter being moved out by the condo conversion, some of which have already been introduced by independent aldermen in the city council. The point I am making is that the residents of Lake Shore and Marine Drive suffer as much from the ward becoming a marketplace as the people of Uptown. They need protection. But now it is the developers who are protected.

Moving west, we find a large number of multi-unit buildings that were built with federal (FHA) or state (IDHA) financing. In most cases the buildings and apartments are not kept in good repair, and the rents are being steadily raised, forcing many out. The threat of condominium conversion in these types of buildings is very real and very threatening. And in the meantime, federal and state regulations are being ignored.

In the central area of the ward there is Uptown, about which I have already spoken. Between Uptown and the east is a zone of new developments which must be watched very carefully for rent gouging and condominium rip-offs. To the south of Uptown, there is an area that is becoming much like Lincoln Park. Here, young families are buying two and three flats and rehabbing them. Rehab costs and mortgage rates are high. Property taxes are also high, partially no doubt because so much slum property goes without paying any taxes in the ward —

throughout the city. These young families should get assistance from the city and should have federal funds available to them without excesses of red tape.

There are pockets of low-income family housing that needs assistance, and there are glaring instances of substandard, exploitative multi-unit hotels that create an unstable element in the community. Unfortunately, the middle-class property owners in the area, in their frustration, often lead an attack on the low-income and Latino families in the area, when their anger should be directed at the men who run the unstable slum housing and reap huge profits because of their connection with the political machine.

My opponent moved into the western part of the ward a few years ago, although he has never been consistently active there. A gross lack of services and inadequacies in the sewage system cause the many homeowners and renters alike many problems and inconveniences. Inflation has made mortgages increasingly difficult to pay, and the city's mortgage program, unmonitored in our ward, was mainly utilized by people who could have well afforded private financing. Federal financing through the city, such as the fifty-fifty program, is legally available to this area, but difficult to get without leverage.

South of East Ravenswood on Southport, family housing, mostly owner-occupied, is threatened by prospects of an extension of New Town following the path of the new Jewel at Southport and Addison creating instability in the neighborhood.

Throughout the entire ward, developers and speculators view it as a marketplace in which they have free rein in creating unstable neighborhoods, rent gouging and a host of financial headaches for buildings and homeowners.

There are several things that we can do, at the minimum. First, condominiums and condominium conversions need to be closely regulated by city ordinance. Second, the

city's rent board, established to stop rent gouging, should be activated and monitored. Third, zoning powers and close scrutiny of federal funding guidelines must be used to leverage developers to stop them from plundering the neighborhoods. Fourth, the aldermanic office must establish a competent staff to help small building and home owners get the assistance and services from the city they so desperately need. Fifth, a new city mortgage incentive program must be developed and structured to meet the needs of those who most need it and for whom it was intended. And finally, of course, the slumlords who operate substandard housing for enormous profits must be cracked down on.

It will take effort and leadership on the part of many people, but the "marketplace" can become a community in which people can live and work in peace. The obstacle who now occupies our seat in city council must be set aside and replaced if we are to be effective.

Could you describe the new health center you are associated with and share some of your ideas about public health needs in the ward?

The Uptown People's Health Center is under the control of a community Board of Directors and is jointly funded by HEW, the National Health Service Corps and the Cook County Health and Hospitals Governing Commission. As such, it is a unique model of a cooperation between federal and state funding sources, at the request and under the direction of a local community, to develop a publicly funded health center with the advantages of a private group practice.

At the new health center, each patient chooses his or her own doctor, who remains with them as their personal physician through regular check-ups, minor illnesses, visits to specialists in the clinic or outside and through hospitalizations. The doctor can



"It does seem bizarre that the alderman would oppose a family-oriented, comprehensive health center dubbed a model for the country, and yet do nothing to monitor the welfare mills in the ward."

be reached 24 hours a day through an answering service.

A wide range of services is available through the center including pediatrics, family practice, gynecology and obstetrics, dentistry, internal medicine, and soon, optometry and nutrition counseling and programming will be available. A sliding scale, following federal guidelines, is used to determine payment, or in some cases non-payment so that cost is not a factor in the way of good, consistent health care.

The center, opened formally in August, has had a steady rush of patients, representing many incomes and areas of our ward. And a series of outreach programs around hypertension and recently dental education in the schools have been initiated by the center already. Health education and preventive health care will be our watchword, and the strong community involve-

ment that persists in the center promises to make these aspects of the program successful.

The existence of a viable and attractive alternative has already allowed us to begin to put pressure on the storefront medicaid mills in the ward which often function as sources of drug abuse. Much more pressure needs to be put on these operations, and there is no reason why the city couldn't pass ordinances which allow monitoring and regulation of the issuance of dangerous drugs without adequate examination in these places.

Strangely enough — or perhaps not so strangely — the development of the health center encountered vigorous opposition both from the city's Board of Health and the present alderman/ward committeeman of our ward. I am convinced that their opposition was based on the fact that the machine would not control the patronage as they do in the board of health center in the ward. This is, after all, the basis of a long-standing attack by the machine on the Cook County Hospital. It does seem bizarre that the alderman would oppose a family-oriented, comprehensive health center that has been dubbed a model for the country and do nothing to even monitor the welfare mills that exist throughout the ward. Again, it is a question of supporting those you can politically control and opposing those you can't — regardless of the quality of service involved.

I will work, as your alderman, to promote cooperation where there is now wasteful competition, between the city's Board of Health and the county's Health and Hospitals Governing Commission. I believe that the Board of Health should concentrate on issues such as the high rate of infant mortality in our ward, on occupational health and safety where our residents work, on the prevention of diseases like dysentery which broke out in Uptown last year, on rat control, and should move seriously to offer much-needed public health programs in the schools. All these things should be done with the cooperation and back-up of the Health

and Hospitals Governing Commission. The Board of Health is now an inept agency, run, by and large, by bureaucrats with little knowledge of the health needs of our community.

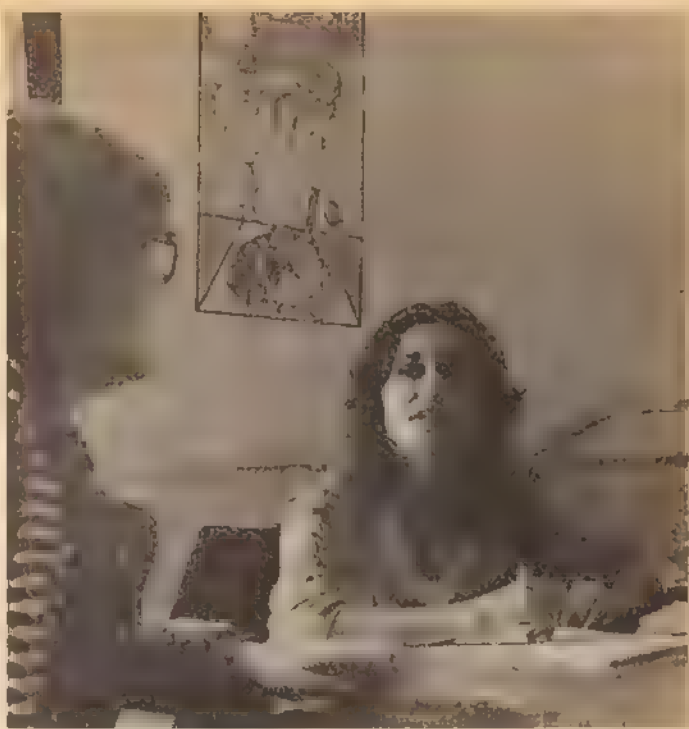
Finally, I believe the community's victory in backing down city hall to develop the center over the last two years is worth studying. The Uptown community, which has little clout in the traditional Chicago sense of the word, presented such a strong argument, backed by surveys, health fairs, studies and overwhelming community support, that the politicians were overruled at the county, state and federal levels. Even the city's own Health Systems Agency commended my surveys and health needs assessments and adopted them as part of their overall planning approach for our area. It can be done!

Ms. Shiller, we have terrible problems with basic services: snow removal, garbage pick-up, street cleaning, park and playground maintenance, sewage systems breakdowns and flooding. As an independent, can you really be effective in delivering these services to our ward?

I believe that my election would bring a great improvement in city services.

First of all, "two is better than one." The only time our ward approaches adequate city services is in the few weeks before an election. The ward boss really turns on the pressure. Of course, after the election he loses interest again. With an independent in this ward's aldermanic seat, the machine will have to compete hard to keep its political base. So four years of Helen Shiller should guarantee four years of hard work by my opponent, who will still be the ward committeeman.

Secondly, and perhaps surprisingly to some of you, wards with independent



Helen Shiller has helped to maintain a full-time service office for the last four years.

aldermen have ranked among the five highest in the city for city services. The answer is simple. The machine alderman cannot "build a fire" under the boys downtown. He must wait his turn as favors are dealt out to each of the ward bosses throughout the city. My opponent is in no position to rock the boat. On the other hand, I have helped to maintain a full-time service center working to get city services as well as handling other community problems for four years. We have already been effective when the machine alderman could do nothing. I am looking forward to keeping the city departments really jumping for the next four years.

Finally, I believe we should apply the same approach to ward services that I have discussed applying to public transportation and have successfully applied to public health. My ward office will work with community residents to do block by block surveys, attempting to identify problems before they hit the crisis point, formulating economical and practical solutions and mobilizing broad community support behind our demands. A loud and clear analysis of city services in our ward and their failings

will give us much stronger negotiating power downtown.

While the problems of housing, health care, employment and education are very serious, poor city services in our ward demoralize and frustrate our neighborhoods terribly. The senior citizen who cannot get across the ice barrier created when snowplows sweep through once on the main arteries and push mountains of snow against the crosswalks is literally imprisoned in his or her home during the snowy season. The street and sidewalks strewn with junk as the wind blows uncollected garbage everywhere takes the pride out of a community. Basement flooding is not only a personal and financial hardship, it is a health hazard. We have a right to action — and not just for a few days before election day!



Sidewalks strewn with uncollected garbage take the pride out of a community.

What can be done about the high rate of crime in our ward?

The problem of crime in our ward, safety in the streets and at home, the constant fear of loss of needed and valuable belongings, does not have a simple solution. Crime in our society is not limited to low-income areas; it permeates every level and every area of our society. It is as much in the suburbs as

in the city. So obviously there is not a simple solution. But I believe there are some things we can do to begin to attack the problem.

First, the pressure on police to produce quotas of arrests must be ended. In its place must go a careful method of investigation, going beyond the small criminal to the men who offer quick profits to carry out one small crime after another. The police should be taken off non-professional tasks like giving parking tickets and put back into foot patrols wherever possible.

Second, and most important, we must do a serious analysis of crime. Almost all the petty crime that makes so many people's lives so miserable is drug-related. A drug culture has developed that is a criminal culture. It is fed by alienated youth from all economic backgrounds, and it is fed by young men and women, sometimes boys and girls, for whom no constructive alternatives are offered. This drug culture nurtures petty crime.

Our ward is a marketplace for the sale of all kinds of dangerous drugs. Customers may be as young as 10 or 11 years old. Once part of the drug culture, they are already part of an illegal culture that needs quick money and in which quick money is often available through small criminal acts.

To attack crime we need to lead a massive attack on drugs. First of all, and most important, this means a massive educational campaign in the schools, closely involving the parents. I know from my contact with other parents as an active parent and Chairperson of the Stockton School Advisory Council that, the desire to become involved around this issue is there. It means changing the attitudes of the families and the older brothers and sisters in a family about drugs so that the younger minds in the family won't be warped and twisted.

Second, our campaign against drugs needs to attack the drug marketplaces. The drug pusher needs a place to sell his goods

that potential buyers know to come to. It must be identifiable. If it can be identified by hundreds of pushers and buyers, it can be identified by the community at large and by the police. The only reason these marketplaces persist is that they have some political protection. There is no other way. Sales run out of residential transient hotels, they run out of certain businesses, they run on the corners in front of certain buildings. What I am saying is that without political protection these marketplaces could not exist. I believe a campaign to make these marketplaces inaccessible to the pushers could be waged. It would not eliminate drugs, but it would make a dent in it and in the environment of crime that emanates from the centers of the drug culture.

From time to time my opponent has made noises about hitting the prostitution in our ward. As a woman, I, too, am tired of being solicited every time I walk alone down certain streets. But much of the prostitution in the ward is operated out of buildings controlled by developers and real estate interests friendly to the machine. Without the marketplace for prostitution, the business would move elsewhere.

I think a good plan to eliminate prostitution is that followed by Mayor Stokes in Cleveland. It was successful. The men who came to do business with the women were arrested, their names were published in the newspapers and their wives or family were called to come and pick them up at the station. It had an immediate and dramatic effect. Perhaps we could do that in the Buena and Broadway area, utilizing a few women police officers.

Most of the appeals to "stopping crime" by politicians (and my opponent is no exception) have been demagogic, aimed at pitting one group against another, one race against another. Crime can be based in a high-rise as well as a tenement. It is not the property of any one class or race of people. It has two vulnerable points: its protection by powerful interests and its involvement of ordinary people. If you will work with me,

perhaps we can make some progress in a realistic, creative way.

You have been active and outspoken about the public schools, but what can an alderman really do to improve the situation in the schools?

Your question accurately reflects the decision by the city to keep the politics of the city council out of education. In reality, of course, the Board of Education and each of its districts is machine-controlled and laced with politics. As a result, a local alderman speaking out on issues like the "Access to Excellence" program failures and low reading scores in the schools does have an effect.

There are, however, some direct things that an alderman can fight for. The first is to change the environment around the schools. Neighborhood programs and activities immediately around the school would mean that our children don't step from frustratingly overcrowded classrooms into the treacherous jungle that makes up the streets of Chicago. The city could hire parents and community residents to staff these programs and radically change the environment around the schools, helping to further integrate the parents into the educational process.

Second, and very important, public health must again become relevant to the schools. In Chicago, the drive to operate extensive public health and education programs in the schools was stopped in the 1930's. The Board of Education employs a number of teacher/nurses, but they are ridiculously overworked. The recent Board of Health-ordered immunization program was disorganized and ineffective and showed why immunization should go on in the schools on a consistent basis. Many more programs should be offered.

Again, some form of cooperation between the Board of Health, the Health and

Hospitals Governing Commission and perhaps the National Health Service Corps should be put together to make public health in the schools a major focus. Our children are, after all, our future.

The rising cost of living is hitting all of us — but it is hitting senior citizens hardest of all. What could the city be doing to help that it is not doing now?

One thing which I and some other in the Uptown People's Food Cooperatives have begun is food buying clubs and food fairs in senior buildings. The response has been overwhelming. An average senior citizen can save several hundred dollars a year on their food bill, and the food co-op serves as a new center of activity for the seniors, bringing them together to work and visit. The city could support these activities, and broaden them greatly by providing back-up from the office of senior citizens and even establishing a special office to facilitate the cooperative movement among seniors.



"Besides the savings, the food co-op serves as a center of activity for the seniors."

The main problem facing senior citizens in general is the lack of low-cost, decent

housing. The city must make a commitment to greatly expand the number of senior citizens public housing units to even meet the present waiting list needs, much less plan for the future.

Will you explain what you mean in your campaigning when you say "Neighborhoods First"?

Why are they planning a new stadium when there are so few recreation centers in the neighborhoods, and those there are, like Gill Park, are understaffed and open only for short hours? Why do they put so much money into street cleaning and street repair in the Loop when the same services are so poor in the neighborhoods? Why are they building a State Street mall when they can't afford to develop the Sunnyside Mall into anything but a slab of concrete that must and has become nothing but a trouble spot in the neighborhood?

These are just a few of the questions indicated when I say "neighborhoods first" must become a virtual battlecry in the City Council. There are many more such questions. Why, for instance, have they spent hundreds of thousands of dollars preparing five studies all coming to the same conclusion, justifying a new subway system in the Loop.

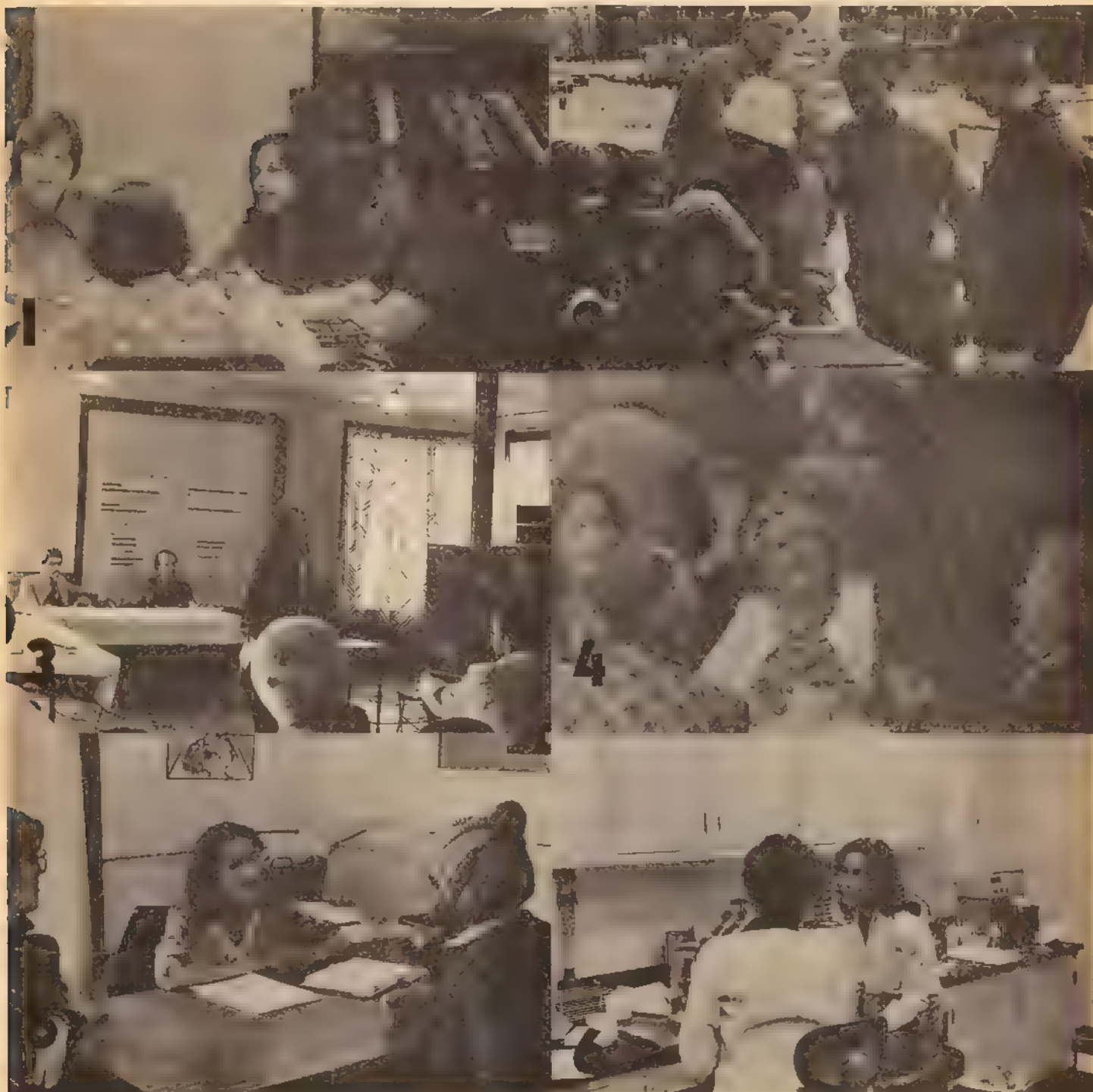
(By the way, the man who supervised doing these five repetitive studies was recently promoted to commissioner of the Department of Development and Planning, one of the most powerful and important positions in the city.)

Why even spend millions on a new subway system when public transportation for people who live in the neighborhoods is so inadequate?

The answer we are given to these questions is something like this: "What is good for the Loop is good for Chicago." It is true that improving the business district of the city is important to the economic health

Helen Shiller

Community Advocate



Helen Shiller: 1. instructor at Shimer College, Uptown Campus; 2. plowing sidewalks, a project of the Community Pride Institute; 3. speaking about community development in Uptown; 4. at a holiday dinner for senior citizens; 5. working with others to solve problems at full time service center; 6. at Uptown People's Health Center.

Respected Leader



Helen Shiller with: 7. Congressman Ron Dellums and State Senator Harold Washington; 8. State Legislator Miriam Balanoff; 9. well-respected community leader C. Allen Morrow; 10. State Legislator Woods Bowman; 11. long-time political activist Bill Singer; former State Legislator Ellis Levin.

of the city, but a city depends for its real economic and social health on the stability of the neighborhoods.

In addition, the same "marketplace" mentality that creates instability in our own ward is being applied to the Loop. The overabundant development of institutions such as banks and large office buildings is destroying the Loop as a shopping center, which will make the Loop less attractive for business.

The city's determination to go with Dearborn Park upper-income residential buildings in the south Loop is a questionable financial venture and would have been better utilized as low-density office buildings and light industrial parks, providing jobs for the people who live in Chicago now.

The real reason for the disproportionate amount of money that goes into the Loop is that it is the way enormous profits can be made for the banking and developer cronies of the machine. They would have the city redeveloped from the Loop outwards. By the time the developers get to the outlying neighborhoods, policies of city neglect will have created unstable neighborhoods where more quick profits can be made. This is the real meaning behind the Chicago 21 plan.

It is time we "dig in," demanding a fair share for the needs of the neighborhoods and a halt to wasteful overspending in the Loop. The voters of Chicago live in the neighborhoods, and a strong voice exposing the present trends in City Council can be effective in turning the tide in favor of "neighborhoods first."

Ms. Shiller, do you have any answers to the alarming rate of unemployment in our ward?

There are few manufacturing employers in our ward, and many service industries, such as Combined Insurance, which employ ward residents, are leaving the city. Many businesses in Chicago complain that the



"It is time WE dig in, demanding a fair share for the needs of the neighborhoods and a halt to wasteful spending in the Loop."

city's economic development commission turns a deaf ear to their needs. This is gradually driving them to leave Chicago. There are virtually no effective job training centers in our ward, preparing young people for jobs in fields such as computer science, where there is need for new workers.

There are things that should be done by an alderman in the ward and in the City Council. The alderman of our ward should have been meeting with the powers that be in Combined Insurance, finding ways to keep them in the city. The alderman should be familiar with the places that ward residents work on the northwest side and advocate for those businesses to keep them in the city. And the alderman should play a leadership role in getting participation for the citizens of our ward in the city's economic development planning process.

Recently I helped to organize litigation and plaintiffs in a suit challenging the city's overall economic development plan guidelines. The city, in usual fashion, overlooked federal guidelines for small business, low-income and minority citizen participation in the plan. Some improvements were made in the plan because of the pressure of the suit and resulting pressure from the U.S. Department of Commerce. It is still a long way from satisfactory, and a decision to continue with the lawsuit may be made by the city-wide plaintiffs.

The point is that a specific community

by community needs and possibilities analysis will never be made by bureaucrats in city hall. They will take the positions and proposals of the large developers who work by their side. That will not bring economic health or reverse the trend of the loss of jobs from our city. There must be intervention and leadership from the local levels.

Chicago's relatively good economic health over the last two decades depended on the fact that a balance and diversification of industry has been maintained. Industry has been leaving Chicago since the 1870's, but previous to the last twenty years, city leadership has been able to induce its replacement, keeping a balance. In the last two decades the city turned its support to the millions of dollars that could be made for a few financiers and developers in large development construction, and let the economic balance in the city go to pieces. We are all going to suffer for it, and suffer more if we don't force more changes.

One small proposal, by the way, which I support for the ward is the development of a farmers market. The market on Water Street has poor facilities and is overcrowded. A new market in the 46th ward would not only bring new jobs to the ward, it would allow ward residents to buy fresh fruit and vegetables at much more realistic prices, cutting out the middle man, and stimulate the much-needed development of food cooperatives in the ward.

The problem of job training is a very serious one, and I would not like to give a flip answer. Over the last year, I have worked with Shimer College and have induced them to establish a campus in the Uptown neighborhood. The campus has 120 students in its first year. At Shimer in Uptown, students ranging in age from 17 to 50 pursue one of the finest liberal arts curriculums in the country. At the same time, they receive education in practical fields such as computer science, health science, community services, accounting, electronics and other fields. The program's utilization of small classes and emphasis on counseling is

allowing students who would never have attempted or were not successful at the city colleges, to pursue a really fine educational program preparing them for meaningful employment.

This experience with Shimer has convinced me that a relevant program for education and employment training can be provided if the care and concern exists to pursue its development.

Ms. Shiller, as an independent do you think you can be effective in City Council?

I have already said that my election would bring more effective services to the ward. The City Council is a different story. Being effective in a city council that is so totally dominated by the regular democratic organization is a very difficult proposition. Still, there are some important things to take into consideration.

The first thing is that my opponent is not effective at all. Neither are most of the machine aldermen. Alderman Lathrop's recent study shows that most City Council members, and my opponent promises to be no exception, introduce relatively few ordinances and do not really get more passed than the independents. The "lock-out" in City Council is really conducted by the Mayor's office. For the Mayor's legislation, the City Council is really nothing more than a rubber stamp, hardly ever voting down his ordinances. But machine aldermen do not have a better record for getting their ordinances passed than independents.

The second thing is that the last seven years of my experience in this ward have prepared me well to bring public pressure behind any ordinance that I introduce. Organized public pressure is the strongest clout that an aldermen can bring to City Council in Chicago at this time.

Finally, I already have relationships with many community groups throughout the city.

I will continue to work with them to build pressure under their City Council representatives to support ordinances that benefit the neighborhoods and to oppose ordinances that are wasteful and insensitive to the needs of the people of Chicago.

Ms. Shiller, you have spoken about a new responsibility and a "new opposition." Could you explain these terms?

Certainly. I believe that we in this city have come to view politics as the business of politicians who take care of problems "for us," if we are lucky enough to know the right people. I am calling for a new responsibility on the part of the citizens of this ward, and as alderman one of my main tasks will be to create structures that allow people to participate in changing and improving their own situations.

I will create committees in the ward around such problems as transportation, public health, housing, rising rents, education, but they will be different kinds of committees. I will use my experience as a community organizer and the broad participating coalition from all across the ward now operating in my campaign to insure that these committees are based in block by block organization, building councils and voluntary community organization. I hope to create an entire framework of committees of responsibility to urge and help the people of this ward take their political future in their own hands.

The term "new opposition" is one I use to describe the new kind of independent that is emerging in this city. The old independents were often content merely to be the "established critics" of a corrupt machine. It is important that there be such critics to watchdog the machine, and one of the realities in this next election is that no independent city council seat is "safe." The Despres's, Singers and Simpsons are not running again. Many independent legislators were badly defeated in the state elections. It is



important that we have honest critics in the City Council and I will be a loud one.

But the new independents must be active in creating alternatives to machine policies and solutions to problems that the machine cannot or will not attempt to solve. I believe, for instance, that the development of our model comprehensive health center, coordinating county and federal resources with community leadership, is a creative solution to the problems of providing quality health care at prices people can afford to pay.

I believe I am qualified to work with the people of this ward to develop new solutions. We have to. Our problems are large, and the machine is entrenched in its errors. We need more than criticism at press conferences. This is the meaning of the new opposition. It draws responsible people from all sectors and areas of the ward to work together to solve problems and fight for the adoption of solutions we prove can work.

Thank you very much.

"Take What You Can Get"

"How can I go downtown after this election and explain this to George Dunne? When you come to me for a raise or promotion, how can I justify it when your sheets look like this? If you're not at the next meeting, don't bother to come to work!" — **Ralph Axelrod, 46th ward committeeman, shortly before the special aldermanic election in May 1978.**



| | | |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Midwest Enterprises and Amusements 5461 N. East River Road Chicago, Ill. 60656 | 4/6/78 | 1,000.00 |
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Reprinted from a partial list of contributors to Citizens for Ralph Axelrod. Horwitz, a crony of Arthur X. Elrod, was forced to resign his position as a county building inspector in 1964 when it was disclosed that he was a partner in a building at 754 S. Wabash which rented space to the Mafia-connected Tornabene brothers for the operation of B-girl clip joints.

Ralph Axelrod Rides The Donkeys In The 46th Ward

Westside politics, northside real estate and cut-rate insurance come together at the corner of Buena and Broadway.

The corner is in the Uptown neighborhood of the 46th ward of the city of Chicago. It's about as close as you can get to the

middle of the 46th ward without entering Graceland Cemetery, which occupies the geographic center of the ward.



Ralph Axelrod



Izzy Horwitz



Artie X. Elrod

Uptown is the heart of the ward. Ten to fifteen years ago it had the largest concentration of southern Whites in the United States. The Black community at Leland and Winthrop was the oldest Black community on Chicago's northside. But hundreds of real estate speculators, demolition courts and wrecking balls have reduced it to a fraction of its former self.

Ralph Axelrod is the boss of the 46th ward. Axelrod is a former administrative assistant at the sheriff's office and was in charge of the 350-man civil process division. He is a member of the machine-powerful Elrod family, a disciple of E.R. "Izzy" Horwitz and a practitioner of the old time "politics by the boot."

Axelrod rose to prominence in Chicago politics in the early 1970's, with a background in insurance sales and 30 years of loyal service to the machine. He started out as administrative

assistant to the late Joe Gill, ward committeeman of the old 46th ward. Joe Gill was at one time a power broker in the highest circles of the Democratic party. (Gill also had a lucrative insurance business on the side.)

In 1970, as the wards were redistricted and a new 46th ward was established, Gill was dumped as committeeman in favor of State Senator Robert Cherry. Ralph Axelrod became Cherry's assistant. In 1972, Cherry was named to a judgeship, and Axelrod became ward committeeman for the 46th ward.

It was the early 1970's when the great masterplan to redevelop Chicago's lakefront, from the Loop to Evanston, reached through Lincoln Park and Lakeview and began to touch Uptown. The years to come would see much destruction and development concentrated in the Uptown and northern

Lakeview communities. The establishment of a newly redistricted 46th ward helped to create a "development zone". Inside the boundaries of the zone, land speculators, slumlords and enterprising developers were given almost a free hand to buy, sell, rent, raze or do whatever would produce the greatest price.

Trying to please the bosses downtown and keep fresh money rolling into the ward, Axelrod quickly established himself as a good friend to the land profiteers.

Axelrod's rise through the democratic machine has been boosted from time to time by the Elrod-Horwitz organization. Arthur X. Elrod and Izzy Horwitz got into politics because it was good for business. Business for them was real estate and insurance. Elrod was the ward committeeman of the old 24th ward on Chicago's westside until his death. Then



The message from Axelrod's workers in front of the Wilson Men's Hotel is clear: "Whether you take the money or not, on election day, everybody votes."

Horwitz took over — that was until they found it necessary to put up a Black "front" in an all Black ward (see KEEP STRONG, October-November 1978). The more powerful they became in Chicago politics, the better it was for business. There was a time, and some say there still is, when you could not sell real estate or insurance in parts of this city without going through Horwitz and Elrod first.

Critics of Axelrod say he has built his ward machinery over the last seven years on that same principle. Whether that is true or not, he has certainly maintained profitable relationships with a variety of real estate operators in the ward since assuming the committee-man's post.

Well known in the Magnolia-Wilson area of Uptown is Mike Segal, who owns and operates two "hotels" on Wilson Av-

enue — the Wilson Men's Club Hotel at 1124 W. Wilson and the Bachelor Club Hotel a few feet to the west. For years, both buildings have been called "machine strongholds," where precinct captains can count on getting large voter turnouts. Coincidentally, both hotels are directly across the street from Truman College and directly west of Axelrod's proposed international shopping center at Broadway and Wilson. Real estate investment counselors expect the value of the land to increase greatly over the next three to four years, if it hasn't already.

Former Axelrod precinct workers who held patronage jobs in the Model Cities division of the streets and sanitation bureau report they used to regularly make the rounds behind Segal's businesses to collect the garbage, a favor which would otherwise cost him thousands of dollars. Segal has

also managed to avoid any city building court actions against him in spite of hundreds of dangerous violations throughout both buildings.

The city's corporation counsel is responsible to bring slumlords into court in order to bring buildings up to compliance with health and safety codes. Only a small segment of the corporation counsel's attorneys are assigned to building court. One of those, who seems to have been there for several years, is Jerry Orbach, Axelrod's ward secretary and captain of the 1st precinct, the largest in the ward and one of the largest in the city. Community activists complain that whether or not Orbach acted to give Segal a pass, he has certainly been looking the other way for over half a dozen years.

When Segal was brought into court a few years ago for

building violations, the matter was quickly dropped. He was represented by attorney Jiro Yamaguchi, an associate of slum speculator and former Axelrod precinct captain Peter Tomase. The case involved a series of violations resulting from dangerous conversions affecting plumbing and wiring. The judge ruled that no permits had ever been granted in the first place, so therefore the conversions could not exist and no violations could exist as a result of them. The judge dismissed the case against Segal.

Any election day will find three or four Axelrod workers crowded around the narrow entrance to the Wilson Hotel. Aside from housing 120 or so sure votes, the Wilson Hotel is also the polling place for the 26th precinct. It quickly becomes clear why the building has been such a democratic bastion. Some of the newer residents have been registered at the door to their rooms, illegally, by the captain or one of his assistants. People who have never registered, come home on election days to find a voter's registration card in their mail box clipped to a note reminding them to vote. On registration days, winos are dragged off the street and given a dollar or two to register. The name that appears later on the poll sheet can be voted by someone else in the next election for a couple of more dollars. Dollar bills are exchanged openly, as if a backyard rummage sale were in progress. The message from Axelrod's workers in front of the building is clear, "Whether



Jerry Orbach, ward secretary, whose powerful position in housing court has been very useful to Boss Axelrod.

you take the money or not, on election day, everybody votes."

The Wilson Hotel's value to the machine became more obvious when Orbach himself was seen filing the hotel's lodging house affidavit (a list of all tenants in the building for cross checking against registration lists) with the Chicago Board of Elections.

Far more devious than Segal are the Pure brothers. They operate a string of nursing homes throughout Uptown. Best known of these is the Stratford House at 4131 N. Sheridan Road. Many years ago a classy northside hotel, it has since been turned, by profit motive, into a veritable dungeon.

The 180 residents of the Stratford live amid wretched

filth, broken toilets and exposed wiring. A recent series in the *Chicago Tribune* called it a "cockroach haven." The four story building's only elevator has been known to remain broken for weeks at a time. The residents are fed leftovers from the Pure brothers' catering business, which are delivered daily. All receive heavy doses of tranquilizing drugs each day, some as much as 300-400 units of Thorazine four times a day.

The Pures avoid a state law and public aid payment condition that requires a nurse to be on duty 24 hours a day to dispense the powerful drugs by having non-qualified nurses' aides administer the tranquilizers. Public aid investigators check by regularly to look at the time cards. Each morning and evening, a time card is punched for an absent or



The Stratford House: polling place for the 8th precinct, where the state pays the Pure brothers \$440 per month for each of its 180 residents.

fictitious nurse. The state pays the Pure brothers \$440 per month for each of the 180 residents of the Stratford.

The Pures' licenses have been suspended or revoked on several occasions by the State Department of Mental Health. The businesses continue to operate while the department's orders are appealed or the houses close down and reopen under a different name.

A recent Stratford employee described the activities of the Axelrod organization before and during the special aldermanic election in May of 1978.

"Axelrod's people came in and gave a party a few days before the election. They had food and a little band. Axelrod came for a few minutes, walked around, said hello, shook a few hands and left."

The Stratford House is the polling place for the 8th precinct. The former employee described what happened on election day.

"On election day, two of his people stood inside the building (the building is shaped so you can stand inside and still be 100 feet from the polling place) and

reminded the people as they came downstairs to vote, 'You remember who gave you the party, don't you? Axelrod.' It's got to be the easiest hundred votes the machine ever got. I don't think three percent of those people know who or what they were voting for."

While the state bumbles through its bureaucracy to put the Pures out of business, the city corporation counsel and building compliance court and the alderman and his ward secretary/corporation counsel seem not to notice. The last recorded attempt by the corporation counsel or the building department to bring the Stratford into compliance was 1968, including the recent surprise investigation by State Rep. William Marovitz, a member of the Axelrod political family.

While Axelrod has avoided public exposure with the likes of Segal or the Pure brothers, other associations have caused him considerable embarrassment. One of these is Peter Tomase. Tomase, rebuffed by East Ravenswood citizens for



Ralph Axelrod and Peter Tomase: some associations have caused Axelrod considerable embarrassment.



The result of real estate speculation and slumlord activities in the Lawrence-Broadway-Wilson-Sheridan area today.

his ridiculous scheme to raze a stable residential block bordered by Cuyler, Greenview and Southport, came to Uptown through the Model Cities community council. Federal law required the election of citizens councils from Model Cities target areas as a condition for receiving Model Cities grant money. At the end of 1972, an election, known to few outside of regular ward organization circles, was held for council positions. The machine ran and elected a full slate of precinct captains, cousins and patronage workers. Keeping the election quiet insured an easy victory. After the election Tomase was named chairman of the housing subcommittee.

Tomase continued to maintain his Ravenswood real estate business and his activity in the Ravenswood Conservation Committee. Many today credit him as the main force that turned the Ravenswood Con-

servation Committee from a citizen participation group into a front for 47th ward boss Ed Kelly, whom Tomase has since gone to work for.

Soon after assuming the chairmanship of the housing

committee, Tomase turned his attention to the area bordered by Wilson, N. Sheridan, Lawrence and Broadway. Declaring the area a "swamp that should be mowed under," Tomase proposed a regional shopping center in the primarily residential area. When the proposal was rejected at a loud and angry community hearing attended by several hundred residents of the proposed site, Tomase quickly withdrew it.

Several months later, he returned with another proposal to build a multi-level parking garage in the Leland-Winthrop area (part of the first proposal's area), using community development funds. This time he had a partner, Gerhard Umlauf of the Uptown Chamber of Commerce and the Bank of Chicago. Once again, area residents, this time primarily Black families who had been in the area since the 1930's and 1940's, told Tomase to forget the idea.



Several hundred residents protested Tomase's shopping center plan when it was first presented.



Rather than developing the Uptown shopping center area for the small businessmen already there, Axelrod cohorts have looked towards more profitable development possibilities for this area.

Tomase returned one more time in 1976 with a scheme whereby the city would buy the abandoned Sheridan Plaza Hotel at Wilson and Sheridan and move its Urban Progress Center from its location at Montrose and Hazel to the old hotel.

Shortly after that, he is believed to have withdrawn from Uptown and began concentrating his time and energy into directing the Ravenswood commission for Ed Kelly. The actual reasons for his burst of interest and activity in Uptown are not clear. But some of his associations help to shed light.

Tomase was an Axelrod precinct captain, which is how he was slated for the Model

Cities council in the first place. He also had a friend named Michael Centanne. Centanne is presently under investigation by the State Department of Education and Registration for questionable real estate practices. Among other slum buildings Centanne had a 12 unit building at 4627-33 N. Winthrop and another at the southeast corner of Lawrence and Kenmore.

Both properties were in Tomase's proposed shopping center boundaries and stood to increase greatly in value if the proposal ever went through. The parking lot proposal called for the city to "condemn the east and west sides of the 4600 block of Winthrop." Centanne's

building at 4627-33 N. Winthrop had burnt several months before, a day or two after bright colored cloth curtains were hung behind glassless windows in a half-hearted attempt to mask the fact that the building was empty.

Centanne, a northwest side real estate operator, was a man with connections of his own. He is on record in 1975-76 as a court-appointed receiver for a building at 4051-57 N. Sheridan. Court-appointed receiverships are real plums, paying \$50 per hour to generally oversee the management of a building. More recently, investigators for the state report that they cannot get the city to cooperate with them in their investigation of Centanne by furnishing the requested building inspection records.

By far, Centanne's most questionable real estate practice was when he continued to collect rent from a building at 4861-63 N. Winthrop several months after it had been ordered condemned and vacated. In this case, the rent collector, at least on one occasion, was Peter Tomase.

Compared to another one of Axelrod's precinct captains, Anthony Enderle, Tomase looks like a choir boy. Enderle, a man with a variety of connections, including a bailiff position in holiday court (an Elrod family political plum) is precinct captain in the 2nd precinct. He owns and operates the New Malden Arms apartments, which is also the polling place for the 2nd precinct. The 100 unit building is called a

hotel. Actually, it almost exclusively houses former mental patients, drug addicts and disabled senior citizens.

Present and former tenants have described Enderle's "arrangement" with residents of the building. Most of the people living there receive some kind of assistance check each month. When the checks arrive the people line up and sign them over to the management. In exchange they receive \$25 or \$30 which is their "expense money." When that money runs out they can "borrow" more by lining up at eight o'clock in the morning and requesting a two dollar loan. Money that is borrowed during the month is paid back at very high interest rates. When the following month's check arrives, first the rent is deducted, then the principal of the previous month's loans are taken out, and finally the interest on the loan is deducted. The tenant is handed another \$25, and the process starts all over again.

Sources close to Enderle's operation report that drugs are sold within the building out of a fourth floor apartment. A drug dealer and former tenant told KEEP STRONG that when Enderle suspected the dealer was going into competition with Enderle, Lou Parsons, an Enderle underling, had him arrested on a drug sales charge. The dealer spent the next 40 hours in jail and appeared in holiday court where the case was dismissed for lack of evidence. Upon returning home the man found that his room had been cleaned out and his belongings locked away. He

was also unable to have any of his rent money returned, although he had been there only a few days into the month. When he began to complain that he was being treated unfairly, the management told him he could keep himself healthy by keeping himself scarce and keeping his mouth shut.

At different times Enderle has traded buildings back and forth with Bill Rasky, the notorious Edgewater slumlord in whose buildings dozens of senior citizens have frozen or burned to death. A few years

back, many of the New Malden Arms residents were on the quarterly plan. Every three months the manager would tell them it was time to move. Their belongings and bodies were then moved to one of the Rasky-Enderle buildings, 5500 N. Kenmore or Winthrop. Most of the people being moved were former mental patients. The moving served to protect a number of different hustles. Most prominent of these was to move out tenants when inspectors were expected to check up on court orders to vacate floors or apartments in their build-



Area block club efforts to force alderman Axelrod to curtail precinct captain Enderle's activities in the Malden Arms Hotel have been fruitless, while the building's 102 registered voters continue to be turned out for machine candidates.

ings. When the inspectors left, others would be moved in.

More recently, Enderle was one of the actors, along with attorney George Brown of the law firm Brown & Brown, a member of the board of directors of the Bank of Chicago, and Hogan, Farwell and Marken Realty, in the formation of Three Star Realty. Financed in part by one of the country's largest insurance companies, Three Star was little more than an experiment in wholesale neighborhood bleeding. They bought up as many as twenty buildings in a few months from various Uptown slumlords.

The scheme sought to use the financing to acquire the buildings and then sell them at prices a few interest points above the mortgage or contract agreement they had. They sold the buildings to anyone who could produce the cash for a downpayment and were raking in tens of thousands of dollars on interest differences while accelerating the destruction of buildings in the Uptown community until they were discredited by community groups and the local press.

There are over 102 registered voters in the New Malden Arms. Election days there are

pretty much the same as in other machine-run hotels. The Axelrod organization has not won an election by less than a two to one margin in over five years in the 2nd precinct.

It is not surprising that efforts of area block clubs to force alderman Axelrod to curtail Enderle's activities last summer were mostly fruitless. While Axelrod publicly criticized Enderle, observers close to the scene say nothing at all has changed at the New Malden Arms, and many feel that probably nothing will, at least not until after the next aldermanic election.

"How Many People Can Ride One Horse?"

"The area's got everything going for it. It's on the lakefront; if Chicago survives at all it's going to be on the northside lakefront — the transportation, the Outer Drive, the parks, the lake, the closeness to the Loop. Everything south of here is built. Some of it could be rebuilt, but almost everything is developed. This is probably one of the last areas where you can get vacant land. There's one heck of a lot of money being invested in this area...."

"...And the whole thing up here, I think, is to get better people on the streets, instead of gangs and derelicts, of which, God knows, there's still an



Bill Thompson's definition of vacant land is in many cases land he made vacant.



Developer Bill Thompson surveys "his" Uptown from his Boardwalk high-rise.

ample supply — to get better people on the streets, and then other better people aren't afraid of being on the streets when they see their own kind. That's what we intended to do when we built the Boardwalk....

"We own, control or manage around 2,000 units within a couple of blocks of where you are. Many of us live here too, in the neighborhood.

"What's gonna be an impediment — and will get me into trouble if this statement isn't handled correctly — is the moderate-income housing in this neighborhood. There's too much of it. You can't load one neighborhood with that much. It's gotta be spread out. It's gotta be spread to the suburbs.

Already there's 5,000 units of subsidy housing here right now. Now how much can you have? How many people can ride one horse?" — Bill Thompson, Chicago magazine, December 1976.

Axelrod's selection to replace Senator Cherry as ward committeeman coincided with the formation of City Centrum Corporation and the beginning of Bill Thompson's assault on southern Uptown. William P. Thompson married Mayor Daley's daughter and bought a license to grab a chunk of the city. Thompson worked for the city Department of Urban Renewal in Lincoln Park in the mid-1960's when they began the mass clearance of Appalachian and Puerto Rican families to

make room for the re-entry of the new White middle class. In the late sixties he was director of real estate for General Dynamics corporation.

He moved to Arthur Rubloff in 1970 as general partner of a 1,100 unit development project and president of the Rubloff Development Corporation.

In 1972, with a few dollars of his own and enough monied contacts to fill a dozen blue books, Thompson put together City Centrum. He scooped up management contracts for several federally financed apartment buildings in the Uptown area, and community activists believe he assembled his working capital through a scheme connecting his wealthy contacts with tax sheltering investment

properties in the Uptown area. He built the 450 unit Boardwalk high-rise at Montrose and Clarendon first. Known for its shoddy construction and an abundance of cockroaches, the Boardwalk remains half-empty six years later.

Thompson's description of the building's rental situation gives the listener one impression: "We rented it on a very selective basis. We have excellent tenants in this building, mostly young, mostly professional, an awful lot of doctors." But tenants of the Boardwalk report that 25-30% of the people now living in the building are city policemen who have moved into the building through a special rental agreement. And Thompson has had to resort to offering \$100 cash rewards and Caribbean trips to tenants who bring new people in.

With the construction of the Boardwalk completed and a contract to manage, with option to buy, the federally-owned Broadway courtyards, Thompson moved first on the Montrose Beach Hotel. The 300 unit building had been home for hundreds of senior citizens, some living there since the 1920's and '30's. It occupied the center of the land that Thompson had designated for his Pensacola Place development — an indoor shopping mall and 300 car garage that would be straddled by two forty story high-rises.

In the spring and summer of 1974, Thompson approached selected Uptown "leaders" for support of his plan, and by fall

his plan was known throughout Uptown. But by this time the transformation had already begun with little anyone could say about it.

The once-quiet apartment hotel was now busy with activity. The old manager had been removed with the carpeting, fixtures and furniture from the lobby and hallways. The new manager was only around to give out mail and collect the rent. The cleaning and janitorial services were withdrawn, and the halls and staircases collected piles of garbage and began to reek. Pimps and drug pushers moved in in twos and threes. Assaults, purse snatchings and muggings brought ambulances and city rescue squads to carry out the battered seniors several times a week.

Then the fires began. Fires in the halls, fires in the elevators, fires in the vacant apartments, so many fires that the smoke smell overcame the garbage stink. The Wilson Avenue fire station reported 15 fires in the four month period from December to April, one a week. According to sources within the fire department, only a fraction of the actual fires appear in the fire department's records. The exodus of seniors hastened until there were less than fifty left. Eviction notices were issued in March. By July the building was down after a series of gigantic blazes. The stores at Montrose and Sheridan were demolished with the hotel.

In the same time period Thompson used his option to buy for his Scotland Yard

project. One hundred and ten mostly Black families, many with CHA subsidies, were evicted. In the spring of 1975, Axelrod, through alderman Chris Cohen, had worked closely with block clubs to the east and west of the Broadway buildings to build support for a police assault, complete with full scale pick-up-anybody-on-the-street dragnets of the area at Broadway and Buena.

The movement to rid Broadway and Buena of prostitutes proved to be little more than a smokescreen for the campaign to drive stable Black families out of the neighborhood and clear the buildings. Having bought the property housing the Urban Progress Center at Montrose and Hazel, Thompson informed the city that they needed to move their community service operation to make way for the Pensacola development.

While a federal suit brought by tenants of the Broadway and Montrose buildings halted construction of Pensacola Place, Thompson stepped to the side and continued moving south. Alliances and relationships were formed with other speculators in the area while new property was bought up. Thompson now controls as much as one-third of the real estate between Irving and Montrose in the Sheridan-Broadway triangle, as well as a 1,000 unit federally mortgaged high-rise at 655 W. Irving which he intends to convert to condominiums.

While referring to Thompson as part of the "new Upswing in

Uptown" Axelrod has stood by quietly and provided Thompson with his largest and most important insurance policy.

From zoning changes at Pen-

sacola to mute silence about the devastation of the Montrose Beach Hotel and the removal of the city's only community services program in Uptown, to the well-orchestrated police

campaign at Broadway courts, to the fifth rate construction of the Boardwalk, the Axelrod organization worked hand in hand with Thompson in his five year development drive.

Politics By The Boot

Longtime residents of the 46th ward and former Axelrod soldiers report he has maintained his power not through a series of successful relationships with real estate scammers, but by practicing tried and tested methods of organization. "He operates on two principles," says a formerly loyal Uptown precinct worker, "Fear-obedience is the first rule. The second is take what you can get and pay for what you can't take."

Indeed, accounts of the behavior of many of Axelrod's captains indicate that fear might be the organization's most effective tool.

Residents of the Norman Hotel, at 1325 W. Wilson, shudder when they are asked about Mack Stahl, a six-foot, silver-haired, process server with the sheriff's office who makes his home in the plush Boardwalk high-rise at 4343 N. Clarendon. Keeping his job depends on the votes he turns out of the Norman Hotel and two or three other places like it near the Malden-Beacon-Wilson area.

Stahl's price for a vote is a two dollar dinner at Norman's

restaurant downstairs or a couple of dollars for a half-pint or pint of wine.

Dressed in \$200 suits and \$40 shirts, Stahl appears before each election and registration day to remind the pensioners, shut-ins, disabled and down-on-their-lucks that voting the right way is the best way to stay out of trouble. What kind of trouble? Landlord trouble, social security trouble, welfare trou-

ble, just about any kind of trouble that an organization that runs the city of Chicago and has deputy sheriffs coming to visit you might make for you.

On election morning, Stahl drives up to the Norman and begins to pack people into his car. Those who are not looking for trouble will make the two-block trip to Stockton School to vote, whether they want dinner at Norman's or not.



On election day morning, those who are not looking for trouble will make the two block trip to vote with deputy sheriff and precinct captain Mack Stahl, whether they want dinner at Norman's or not.

"Contributions" are required of city workers through the "sale" of tickets and ads.

Chicago

46th WARD DEMOCRATIC COMMUNITY OR
4532 NORTH BROADWAY

RALPH M. AXELROD, Committeeman

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Friday, October 13, 1978

COCKTAILS - 7:00 P.M. DINNER - 8:00

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Equipment for sale
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Weekend for 2
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Winners will be notified • DONATION \$100

No. _____

A copy of our report filed with the County Clerk will be available for inspection at the County Clerk's Office, Building 1, Chicago, Illinois.

keep themselves in power. They are not a means to accomplish some greater ends, but are designed and aimed to perpetuate themselves. The maintenance and growth of the organization is the end, the goal. The spoils or booty that the machine makes possible — the million dollar real estate deals, the fat, rigged contracts or the immunities from laws that apply to most citizens — make the city, or in this case the ward, a giant crap game open only to those who will work for or with the organization.

But none of this can happen without the vote and the vote costs money. In the three month period from July to October 1978, the Axelrod organization raised \$22,500. By comparison, the previous year produced only \$35,000. Sources within the Axelrod organization explain that it is not unusual to raise substantial sums of money in years when elections take place, as compared to off years.

There are, however, a couple of things which even the sleaziest of accountants would call more than unusual. The first of these is \$11,347.23, which appears at the top of the financial report for the period July-October 1978 in the bal-

Three-hundred pound Sam Odishoo is the precinct captain over at the CHA senior and disabled residential complex at Clark and Irving Park. Odishoo, employed by the city streets and sanitation bureau, has mastered using his false prestige as a precinct captain to give the elderly the impression that he has some control over their lives. He is highly regarded within the Axelrod organization for his consistent 250-300 voter turnouts since he has taken over the buildings eight years ago. The over-400 seniors and disabled people living in the complex are particularly vulnerable.

The units are subsidized, making the rents considerably lower than comparable places in Lakeview-Uptown, and all the residents are on some type of assistance. Odishoo is reputed to use these conditions, plus his enormous girth, free reign of the buildings before an

election and total control of the polling place to remind the residents about the importance of voting the right way and making sure they do on election day.

John Washington, an assistant precinct captain in the 18th precinct, is a deputy sheriff. He has been seen many times campaigning for party candidates while carrying a loaded weapon. In May 1978, when a distinguished state legislator was set to appear in the building next door to Washington's, on behalf of an anti-machine candidate, Washington paid a visit to the elderly couple who were hosting the event. The assistant captain advised them not to allow State Senator Harold Washington into their home on behalf of aldermanic candidate Helen Shiller. He warned them that their landlord, who was a friend of his and the organization's, could have them removed from the building. The couple *did* host the event and his threats proved idle.

Political machines differ from other organizations because they have a single purpose — to

ance forward column. This \$11,347.23 is the difference between the income and the expenses for the previous year. The problem was that somebody's addition was off and came up with an extra \$11,000 that wasn't in the contributions and that same \$11,000 went into the report for the following period, not as a math mistake but rather as total funds available or balance forward.

Lastly, there is no record in their report of expenses, of Axelrod paying any rent for his converted-supermarket campaign office on N. Broadway. Either they got an in kind contribution or they paid rent, but neither is reported. In any case, maybe it's time Axelrod thought about getting himself another treasurer.

While the organization's report to the state election authority lists the primary sources of its income as "Sale of tickets, Mass Collections and Other Sales," the money is actually funneled through a complicated precinct by precinct quota system requiring all city workers to kick back percentages of their salary to the organization. The amount of money a person is required to "contribute" is based on their prestige within the organization, which translates to how many votes they turn out regularly.

Notwithstanding their mumbo-jumbo accounting and reporting methods, the organization has greatly increased their income in the last three months over the same period a year ago. People within the organi-

zation attribute the sizeable increase to the addition of Paul Cymbalisty to the inner circle of the Axelrod organization. A 250 pound former hockey player, Cymbalisty was introduced to Axelrod by Al Ronan, a northwest side boss who worked closely with Axelrod to dump state representative Ellis Levin in the March 1978 Democratic party primary. Operating behind two front organizations called the Northwest Democratic Organization and La Salle Consultants, which have the same address Cymbalisty uses, an apartment at 5358 N. Cumberland, Cymbalisty touts himself as a professional organizer whose services are available to the highest bidder.

He went to work for Axelrod in March or April of 1978. Tommy Anostos, treasurer of the ward organization and captain in the powerful 37th precinct, was assigned to show him around. Before long Cymbalisty was making the rounds on his own. Once Axelrod was elected, Cymbalisty was named aldermanic aide, a title which offered good cover for his real assignment — to beef up the organization, get the captains and the workers in line and start the money rolling in. One of his first acts was to try to levy an extra \$30 a month ward organization tax on all patronage employees over and above the usual sale of banquet and raffle tickets. Apparently this

Paul Cymbalisty was named Axelrod's aldermanic aide. His assignment was to beef up the organization, get the captains and the workers in line and start the money rolling in.



was met with some resistance among the troops, and he backed off quickly.

Between May 1 and May 22 Axelrod paid Cymbalisty and his various fronts over \$2,200. On September 27, Cymbalisty kicked back \$500 to the ward organization through his Northwest Democratic Organization.

Axelrod's need to beef up his organization is no laughing matter. The subject of his declining vote strength brings strong remarks from machine insiders and opponents alike.

"He's been playing both ends against the middle since 1972. Just look what's happened to Uptown. One out of every four people that was here is not only not here now but there is no place for them to live in this community any longer," states long-time machine critic and opponent Helen Shiller. "He's opened the ward, and Uptown in particular, to every conceivable type of speculator and real estate huckster. Some of these people will walk across his face to get to the bank. Services in these neighborhoods began to be reduced right after he took over. It's just a fact that he is not going to fight for or provide services to a population he is helping to remove.

"The majority of people who are left in these neighborhoods will not support him. So he's had to turn to the halfway houses, nursing homes and flophouses for his votes in the whole central part of the ward, and that's why you find the machine protecting people like Mike Segal and the Pure

brothers."

Indeed, returns from recent elections, including Axelrod's show that as much as 37-39% of the total democratic vote in the ward come from precincts where Axelrod exercises some sort of extraordinary control over the voters.

"He doesn't have the charisma or the following that Chris Cohen had on the lakefront," suggests an Axelrod worker, "At least Cohen made a show of caring about the needs of the old people. And he got a lot of votes just for the effort. People who never liked Axelrod in the first place, got angry when he moved Cohen out of the ward office. They took it as a slap in the face. He should have recognized that and bent over backwards to organize programs for those senior citizens over there. They're the majority over there, you know. But that's just not Ralph's style."

Finally, many observers feel that Axelrod's weak position in regards to condominium conversions has cut deeply into his lakefront vote. "The giant real estate companies seem to be taking over the whole lakefront. They send you a letter and tell you that you've got 60 or 90 days to come up with a downpayment at their price or start packing. People have lived in these buildings for years and he hasn't even got the nerve to take a strong position. How can he expect us to support him?," explains a 10 year resident of Lake Shore Drive who voted against the machine for the first time last May.

While Cymbalisty, La Salle, Northwest and Company may have added new weight to Axelrod's boot, it is clear that he is not the brains that moves it or the power that brings it down on thousands of honest people across the 46th ward. The power and brains rest somewhere between Izzy Horwitz's Washington Street offices and his Lincolnwood bank. Axelrod controls the jobs in the 46th ward and he tries to keep the Donkeys alive. But he rules only so long as the Elrods, Horwitzs, Neisteins and Dunnes allow him to and he knows it better than anyone. He passes the heat that he takes onto his captains and they pass it onto their workers.

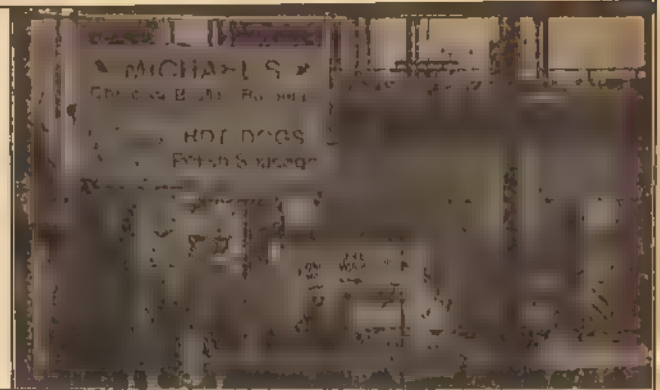
Insiders say the machine might last a few more years in the 46th ward, but not more than a few. His methods are becoming ineffective as poor people are being driven from neighborhoods in the ward and his captains are less and less willing to eat what they used to. One former captain explained the situation like this:

"Ralph Axelrod is irrational, he's inept. He can't even motivate his own people. I don't know anyone in the ward since he's been committeeman that's said one nice thing about him. None of his workers or captains has ever said 'I like Ralph Axelrod.' He's still of the school that thinks the way you get things done is through intimidation, threatening people and threats to job security. The 46th ward organization doesn't do anything for people. It offers very few services to its voters." □

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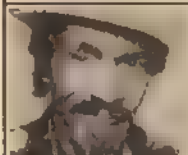
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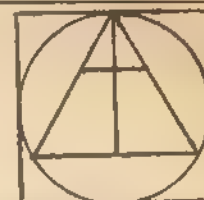
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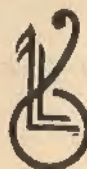
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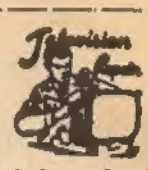
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